

(Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2479, a bill to withhold United States contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and for other purposes.

S. 2493

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 2493, a bill to extend the deadline for eligible health care providers to use certain funds received from the COVID-19 Provider Relief Fund, and for other purposes.

S. 2520

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2520, a bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for engagements with State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and for other purposes.

S. 2552

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2552, a bill to promote long-term economic recovery and job creation in underserved communities by providing for investment in catalytic local predevelopment projects for resilient climate infrastructure innovation and to provide assistance to support State and local project development, and for other purposes.

S. 2660

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSOFF) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2660, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to authorize grants for toxic substances remediation in schools, to reauthorize healthy high-performance schools, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 334

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 334, a resolution memorializing those impacted by and lost to the COVID-19 virus.

## SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

### SENATE RESOLUTION 344—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE STATE OF ISRAEL JOINING THE AFRICAN UNION UNDER OBSERVER STATUS

Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 344

Whereas the State of Israel enjoyed observer status in the predecessor organization

to the African Union known as the Organization of African Unity until its dissolution in 2002;

Whereas the late Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi blocked Israel from obtaining observer status at the African Union in 2002;

Whereas Israel, in the span of a few decades, has emerged as a developed nation and therefore offers an example of a path to economic progress for developing countries;

Whereas Israel has long been an active and valuable partner to many African nations, cultivating numerous strong bilateral relationships across the continent;

Whereas Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a historic visit to Africa in July 2016 and became the first leader outside of Africa to address the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in June 2017;

Whereas many African leaders subsequently visited Israel, including those from the Republic of Chad, the Kingdom of Eswatini, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Republic of Ghana, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Togolese Republic, and the Republic of Zambia;

Whereas the Abraham Accords paved the way for further normalization agreements between Israel and other nations;

Whereas Israel has supported African nations through economic investments and humanitarian assistance; and

Whereas, on July 22, 2021, the African Union announced that Israel will join the African Union under observer status: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) encourages heightened cooperation between the State of Israel and African nations, particularly in areas that are significant in progress towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as economic growth, sustainable agriculture, and humanitarian development;

(2) expects Israel's observer status in the African Union will help enable such cooperation to develop between Israel and the African Union;

(3) commends the African Union for granting Israel observer status in the African Union; and

(4) thanks Felix Tshisekedi, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chair of the African Union, for his leadership in strengthening Israel-African relations by ensuring the recognition of Israel under observer status occurred during his tenure as Chair of the African Union.

### SENATE RESOLUTION 345—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BELARUS

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. HAGERTY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. RES. 345

Whereas the United States Senate has long maintained strong bipartisan concern regarding the troubling lack of democracy in Belarus, highlighted by the passing of the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-347; 22 U.S.C. 5811 note);

Whereas the 116th Congress, as referenced in H.R. 8438, the Belarus Democracy, Human

Rights, and Sovereignty Act of 2020, and Senate Resolution 658, which both passed with unanimous support, stated its deep concern regarding the fraudulent election in Belarus on August 9, 2020;

Whereas on September 17, 2020, the Moscow Mechanism of the human dimension of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was invoked by 17 participating states with regard to credible reports of human rights violations before, during, and after the presidential election of August 9, 2020, in Belarus;

Whereas, following Alyaksandr Lukashenka's inauguration on September 23, 2020, the United States, the European Union, numerous European Union member states, the United Kingdom, and Canada announced they did not recognize the legitimacy of the election results;

Whereas after the August 9, 2020 presidential election, the Government of Belarus responded to the resulting peaceful protests, the largest in the country's history, with a violent crackdown, including the detention of more than 10,000 peaceful protectors, according to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus;

Whereas the Government of Belarus, under the misrule of the Lukashenka regime, continues to engage in a pattern of clear and persistent violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms and disrespects the basic principles of democratic governance by subjecting tens of thousands of pro-democracy political activists, peaceful protesters, and ordinary citizens to harassment, beatings, abductions, forced deportations, and imprisonment and by committing acts of transnational repression to punish any dissent expressed by Belarusian citizens;

Whereas the Lukashenka regime continues to silence independent media, such as Nasha Niva, tut.by, and Belsat, and has unlawfully raided the offices of media outlets, including Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and arrested journalists;

Whereas on September 11, 2020, then-Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun said that "we stand by our long-term commitment to support the sovereignty of Belarus as well as its territorial integrity, as the aspirations of the Belarusian people to determine their own path remains in front of us";

Whereas on May 23, 2021, the Lukashenka regime forced a commercial airliner flying between two European Union member states to land in Minsk in order for the regime to arrest journalist Raman Pratasevich and his partner Sofia Sapega, an action that resulted in near universal condemnation from the international community and coordinated sanctions by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union;

Whereas on May 28, 2021, the White House announced the re-imposition of full blocking sanctions against nine Belarusian state-owned enterprises and announced a new Executive order to increase sanctions on elements of the Lukashenka regime;

Whereas the Lukashenka regime has actively encouraged over 4,000 migrants from other countries to cross through Belarus into European Union member state Lithuania, amounting to people smuggling and obliging Lithuania to declare a state of emergency;

Whereas on June 9, 2021, the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate held a hearing regarding the political situation in Belarus, in which United States Ambassador to Belarus Julie Fisher testified that "Despite the oppression, the violence, and the turmoil that followed the events of the past year provide glimmers of hope. A new generation of brave Belarusians, with courageous women at the front, have emerged. They represent a Belarus determined to